

THE  
VANITY  
OF THE  
WORLD.

---

By EZEKIEL HOPKINS,  
Now Lord Bishop of *London-Derry*.

---



---

L O N D O N :

Printed for *Nathaniel Ranew* and *Jonathan Robinson*, at the King's Arms and Golden Lion in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*. 1685.

THE  
T. M. A. V.

1700

1700





TO THE  
Right Worshipful  
Sir ROBERT VINER  
Knight and Baronet.

*S I R,*

**W**Ere You  
one of that  
sort of Men, who  
value themselves  
by the Bag, or the  
A 2 Acre ;

---

## The EPISTLE

---

Acre; it might possibly be thought rather an Affront, than a Dedication to prefix your Name to this Treatise. For since it is purposely intended to beat down the Price of the VVorld, and to expose its admired Vanities to publick contempt, those sordid Spirits,

---

## DEDICATORY.

---

rits, who have no other worth to commend them, but what is summed up in their yearly Revenues, would interpret such an Address, not so much a tender of Respect and Service, as a Design to undo and beggar them. But, Sir, to you, whom God hath doubly  
A 3 blest

---

## The EPISTLE

---

blest with a large Estate, and a larger Heart, I doubt not but this Piece will be very acceptable ; if upon no other account, yet at least as the perusal of it may be helpful to you to strip off, and as it were, to sequester all your worldly Advantages, that you may the better

---

## DEDICATORY.

---

ter take an estimate of your self according to your Native and Genuine Worth, both as a Man; and as a Christian.

I am not so much a Cynick, as to plead for affected Poverty, and a disdainful rejecting the Gifts of Divine Providence. Such a morose & sowe  
A 4 Pride,

---

## THE EPISTLE

---

Pride, I judg worthy to be chastis'd, not only with the censure of Vanity, but Impiety. We need not shelter our selves under any Monastick Vow; nor fly to Deserts and Solitudes, to hide us from the Allurements of the World: This is to run away from that Enemy

---

## DEDICATORY.

---

Enemy whom we ought to conquer. Certainly Religion allows us the possession of earthly Comforts ; only it regulates the use, and forbids the inordinate love of them. VVe may prize them as Comforts, but not as Treasures: And while we imploy a due part of our Abun-

---

## The EPISTLE

---

Abundance in the works of a generous Charity, and true Piety, we may well look upon what is left, as a Salary that God gives us for being faithful Stewards of the rest. Thus to use the world for the Interests of Heaven, to make its Enjoyments tributary to God's Glory,



---

## DEDICATORY.

---

Glory, it is to convert and profelite it ; and turn that into an Offering, which others make an Idol. By this we give Earth a Translation ; and in a nobler sence than the new Systeme of Astronomy teacheth, advance it to be a Star, and a Celestial Body. And  
by

---

## The EPISTLE

---

by this Method,  
we change those  
Helps that Vice  
had to make it self  
prodigious and in-  
famous, into the  
most serviceable  
Instruments that  
Vertue can have  
to make it self con-  
spicuous and ex-  
emplary. For  
VVealth and Ho-  
nour in a vertuous  
Person, are like the  
wel-

---

## DEDICATORY.

---

well-setting of a Jem;  
which, though it makes  
it not more precious,  
makes it more spark-  
ling.

But, Sir, I forget  
my self, and instead  
of vvriting a Letter,  
am vvriting a Treatise.  
I shall make no other  
Apology for it, but  
that the Book being  
designed against Va-  
nity,

---

## The EPISTLE

---

nity, I vvould not have the Dedication of it guilty of that common and notorious One, to be fill'd only vvith Complements. And I hope you vvill not think it any thing of that strain, when I shall assure you that my Prayers to God for you are, that you may still enjoy all advantages of doing good here  
on

---

# DEDICATORY.

---

on Earth, and hereaf-  
ter receive the Reward  
of it in Heaven.

Your most humble,  
and most obliged

Oxon  
*Feb. 1.*  
1668.

Servant,

*Ezek. Hopkins.*

---

# DEDICATORY

on Health and Liberty  
to the People of the United States  
of America

Young and Old

and Young and Old

and Young and Old

and Young and Old

and Young and Old

and Young and Old

and Young and Old

and Young and Old

and Young and Old

and Young and Old



THE  
VANITY  
OF THE  
WORLD.

---

Ecclesiastes 1. 2.

*Vanity of Vanities, saith the  
Preacher, Vanity of Vanities,  
all is Vanity.*

**T**HE Preacher here  
mentioned, is no less  
a Person than Solo-  
mon : and this whole Book is  
B no

no other than his Recantation Sermon. The Text he preach'd on, is the same that I have chosen; and it contains the true and severe Judgment he past upon all things under the Sun. Certainly, he who had Ri-

a) 1 Kings  
8. 27.

*ches as plentiful as the (a) Stones of the Street; and Wisdom as*

b) 1 Kings  
4. 29.

*large as the Sand of the (b) Sea,* could want no Advantages, either to try Experiments, or draw Conclusions from them.

c) Ecclef. 1.  
16, 17.

And yet, when he had (c) employed both, in the critical search of true Happiness, and Contentment, and had dissected and ransacked the whole World to find it, He returns disappointed of his Hopes, and tired with his Pursuit, and begins the sad Narrative of his long



long Wandrings and Errors,  
with *Vanity of Vanities*, all is  
*Vanity*.

The whole Verse is loaden 1.  
with Emphases : And it is first  
observable, That he doth not  
glide into it, by any smooth  
connexion of Sence, or Sen-  
tences ; but on a sudden  
breaks upon us, with a surpris-  
ing abruptness. *Vanity of Va-*  
*vanities*. Which shews a Mind  
so full of Matter, that it could  
not attend the Circumstance  
of a Prologue to usher it in.

Again ; it is all exprest in 2.  
the Abstract. It sufficed not  
to censure all things to be  
vain, but they are *Vanity* it  
self.

And this Abstract hath a- 3.  
nother heapt upon it, *Vanity*  
B 2 of

of *Vanities*. Now this reflexion of the same word upon it self, is alway used to signify the height and greatness of the thing exprest, as *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*, denotes the highest King, and the most absolute Lord. So here *Vanity of Vanities* intimates to us the most exceeding Superlative Vanity imaginable.

4. Again ; this is not only once pronounced, but doubled and repeated : partly the more to confirm this Truth to our belief ; and thus *Pharaoh's Dream* was \*doubled : and partly the more to imprint it upon our consideration. *Vanity of Vanities, Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.*

\*Gen. 4. 32.

But

But though this be exprest in most general and comprehensive terms, yet it must not be taken in the utmost latitude, as if there were nothing at all of solid and real good extant. It is enough if we understand the words in a sense restrained to the subject matter whereof he here treats. For the wise Man \* himself <sup>\*Eccles: 12.</sup> exempts the *Fear and Service of* <sup>13.</sup> *God*, from that *Vanity* under which he had concluded all other things. God and Religion have in them a solid and substantial Good; the one as our utmost End and Happiness, the other as the best proportioned Means to attain it.

When therefore he pronounceth all to be Vanity, it must be meant of all worldly and earthly things; for he speaks only of these. And if we enquire what these worldly Things are, that have this censure of Vanity so vehemently past upon them, Saint *John* hath drawn up a full and true Inventory of all the Goods that are to be found in this great House of the Universe, *1 John 2. 16. All that is in the World, is the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life. The Lusts of the Flesh, are the Pleasures of the World; which are all of them suited to gratify the sensual and fleshly part of Man. The Lusts of the Eye, are Riches; so called,*  
be-

because their greatest service-  
ableness is only to make a  
glittering and dazling shew.  
Which sence *Solomon* approves,  
*Eccles. 5. 11. What good is*  
*there to the Owners thereof,*  
*save the beholding them with*  
*their Eyes?* The *Pride of Life*  
is Honour and Dignity, that  
flatulent and airy Notion, that  
puffs up Mens Pride and Vain-  
glory, and makes them look  
upon their Inferiors, as though  
they were not their Fellow-  
Creatures. This is all that  
the World can shew, *Pleasures,*  
*Riches, Honours;* and this is  
that *All* concerning which the  
wise Man pronounceth that it  
is *Vanity*.

For these things, tho they  
make a fair and gaudy shew,

B 4

yet

yet it is all but shew and appearance. As Bubbles blown into the Air, wil represent great variety of Orient and Glittering Colours, not (as some suppose) that there are any such really there, but only they appear so to us, through a false reflexion of Light cast upon them: so truly this World, this Earth on which we live, is nothing else but a great Bubble blown up by the Breath of God in the midst of the Air where it now hangs. It sparkles with ten thousand Glories; not that they are so in themselves, but only they seem so to us thorough the false Light, by which we look upon them. If we come to grasp it, like a thin Film, it breaks, and leaves nothing

thing but Wind and Disappointment in our Hands: as Histories report of the Fruits that grow near the Dead Sea, where once Sodom and Gomorrah stood, they appear very fair and beautiful to the Eye, but if they be crush'd, turn straight to Smoak and Ashes.

Tacit. Hist. lib. 5.

*Fumum exhalant & fatiscent in vagum pulverem* Solin.

Joseph. Antiquit. l. 5.

c. 5.

The Subject which I have propounded to discourse of, is this Vanity of the World, and of all things here below; that being hereof convinced, we may desist our vain pursuit of vain Objects, and may set our Affections on those things which are Above, which are the alone valuable, because the only permanent and stable Good. Whence is it that we are become so degenerate, that

that we, who have immortal and heaven-born Souls, should stake them down to these perishing Injoyments? Whence is it, that we, who should soar aloft unto God, and were to that end fitted with the fleet Wings of Meditation and Affections, to cut through the Heavens in an instant, and to appear there before the Throne of the great God, that we should lie here groveling in the thick Clay and muck of this World, as if the Serpent's Curse were become ours, *to creep upon our Bellies, and to lick up the Dust of the Earth?* Do we not shamefully degrade our selves, when we stoop to admire what is so vastly below us, and barter away our precious Souls,  
Souls

Gen. 3. 14.



Souls more worth than ten thousand Worlds, only to gain some small part of one? Certainly the God of this World hath blinded Mens Eyes, and cast a strange mist beforethem, that they cannot discern, what is most evident and obvious, even the instability and vanity of all sublunary Enjoyments. That I may therefore contribute somewhat to scatter this Mist, I shall endeavour to represent to you the native and genuine Vanity that is in all earthly things, free from that deceitful Varnish, which the Devil usually puts upon them; and so to deform, and wound that great Sorcerer, that his charms may have no more Power to prevail over you.

Now,

Now, that we may rightly proceed in this, I shall premise these two or three things.

- I. *First*; There is nothing in the World vain in respect of its natural Being. Whatsoever God hath made, is, in its kind good. And so the great Creator pronounced of them, when he took a survey of all the Works of his Hands. Gen. 1. 31. *God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.* There is a most harmonious Order and Beauty in all the Creation, and every part of it. And therefore *Solomon* must not be here so interpreted, as if he disparaged the Works of God in pronouncing them

them all *Vanity*. Certainly he doth not libel his Creator, nor upbraid him as though he had filled the World only with vain Toys and Trifles. If we regard the wonderful Artifice and Wisdom that shines forth in the Frame of Nature, we cannot have so unworthy a thought, either of the World it self, or of God who made it.

View the Sun (next unto † God) the great *Father of* † *Jam. 1. 17.*  
*Lights*. View the numerous Assembly of the Stars; observe their Influences, their Courses, and Measures. Is it a vain or impertinent thing, to spread forth the Heavens, and to beat out a Path for every one of these to walk in! The  
 Air,

Air, that thin and subtil Vail  
that God hath spread over the  
Face of Nature; the Earth,  
that God hath pois'd in the  
midst of the Air, and the  
whole Universe in the midst  
of a vast and boundless No-  
thing: The great Sea, whose  
proud Waves God binds in  
with a Girdle of Sand; and  
checks its rage by a Body al-  
most as unsetled and roling as  
it self: The various kinds of  
Creatures that God governs  
by a wonderful *Oeconomy*; the  
great Family of brute Beasts,  
which God brings up and edu-  
cates without disorder; but  
especially Man, the Lord and  
Chief of the World, that knot  
that God hath tied between  
Heaven and Earth, that Sacred  
Band

Band of Time with Eternity :  
If we consider the Frame and  
composition of all these things  
in themselves, or their useful-  
ness and subserviency unto us,  
we shall be so far from brand-  
ing them with Vanity, that un-  
less our Contemplations lead  
us from natural things to the  
great God who formed them,  
we might rather fear lest their  
Beauty and Excellency should  
invigle us, as it did the Hea-  
then, to look no farther for a  
Deity, but worship them as  
Gods.

*Secondly* ; There is nothing  
vain in respect of God the  
Creator. He makes his Ends  
out of all ; for they all glorify  
him according to their several  
Ranks

II.

Ἐξουσίᾳ δὲ  
ἐννοιαυτέῃ  
πρῶτον μὲν  
ποτὶ τὰ καλὰς  
πάντες φησὶ  
των προσλαμ-  
βάνοντες οὐ  
δὲν γὰρ ἴσθαι κα-  
λὴν εἶη καὶ  
ὡς ἐπεὶ καὶ γινέ-  
ται Plut. de  
placitis phi-  
los. c. 6.

Ranks and Orders ; and to rational and considerate Men, are most evident Demonstrations of his infinite Being, Wisdom, and Power. In which sense the Apostle tells us, *Rom. 1. 20.* *The Invisible Things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead.* God hath composed two Books, by the diligent study of which we may attain to the knowledg of Himself ; the Book of the Creatures, and the Book of the Scriptures. The Book of the Creatures is written in those great Letters of Heaven and Earth, the Air and Sea, and by these we may spell out somewhat of God. He made them for our Instruction,

as

as well as for our Service. The least and vilest of them read us Lectures of his Glorious Attributes ; nor is it any Absurdity to say, That as they are all the Works of his Mouth, so they are all the Words of his Hand. Indeed, this Knowledg that the Creatures give us of the Creator, cannot suffice to make us happy, tho it may be sufficient to make us (a) inexcusable. We could never have collected from them those mysterious Discoveries of God, which the Scriptures exhibit, and which are so necessary to our eternal Bliss. For what Signature is there stamp't upon any of the Creatures of a Trinity in Unity ; of the Eternal Generation, or Temporal In-

C                      carna-

a) Rom. 1.  
20, 21.

carnation of the Son of God? What Creature could have informed us of our first Fall, and Guilt contracted by it? Or where can we find the Copy of the Covenant of Works, or of Grace printed upon any of the Creatures? All the great Sages of the World, tho' they were Nature's Secretaries, and ranfackt its abstrusest Secrets, yet all their Learning and Knowledg could never discover that Sacred Mystery of a Crucified Saviour. These are Truths which Nature and Reason are so far from finding out, that they can scarce

b) 1 Cor. 2. (b) receive them when discovered. And therefore God hath manifested them to us by the Light and Revelation of the

b) 1 Cor. 2.

14.



the Holy Scriptures. But yet so much of God as belongs to those two great Titles of Creator and Governor of the World, our Reason may collect from created and visible Things, running up their Consequences, till they are all resolved into the first Cause and Origine of all.

*Thirdly, Therefore, All the* III.  
Vanity that is in worldly things, is only in respect of the sin and folly of Man. For those things are said to be Vain, which neither do, nor can perform what we expect from them. Our great Expectation is Happiness, and our great Folly is that we think to obtain it by the enjoyments

of this World. This makes Men pursue Pleasures, hoard up Riches, court Honours and Preferments, because they look with an over-weening conceit on these things, as such as can make them truly happy. Whereas to seek for Happiness among these worldly things, is but to seek the living among the dead: yea, it is but to search for Happiness among those things which are the very Root and Occasion of all our Misery. They are all of them leaky and broken Cisterns, and cannot hold this living Water. (c) This is it which makes them charged with Vanity, because in our perverted Phancy, we look upon them as stable, permanent,

(c) Τάδε αὖτος ὁ  
 κενώτατος  
 τοῖς ἀνθρώποις  
 ψυχῆς  
 γίνεται ἐν τοῖς  
 ταῦτα μακά-  
 ρειά τε δοξα-  
 ζεῖν καὶ ἀφθα-  
 ρα Epic. apud  
 Laert. in vita  
 Epicuri.

nent, and satisfactory, fix  
 them as our Journeys End,  
 which ought only to be u-  
 sed by us in our Passage,  
 and expect much more  
 from them than they can  
 yield: And so indeed the Va-  
 nity is not so much theirs as  
 ours.

d) *Aug. doct.*  
*Christ. l. 1. c. 3*  
 e) *Lomb. l. 1.*  
*d. 1 Aquin. 1.*  
*12. q. 11. 16*  
*Durand. l. 1.*  
*d. 1. q. 4.*

There are some things (as  
 (d) *S. Austin* and the (e) *Schools*  
 from him do well distinguish)  
 which must be only enjoyed,  
 other things that must be on-  
 ly used. To (f) enjoy, is to  
 cleave to an Object by Love  
 for its own sake; and this be-  
 longs only to God. What we  
 (g) use, we refer to the ob-  
 taining of what we desire to  
 enjoy; And this belongs to  
 the Creatures. So that we

*Arim. d. 1. 4.*  
 3. *Art. 2.*  
*Alfiss. l. 3.*  
*tract. 10.*  
 f) *Frui est a-*  
*more alicui*  
*rei inharere*  
*propter seip-*  
*sam. Aug.*  
*doct. Christ.*  
*l. 1. c. 4.*  
 g) *Uti au-*  
*tem quod in*  
*usum vene-*  
*rit ad id*  
*quod amas,*  
*obtinendum*  
*referre. Id.*  
*ibid.*

h) *Urendum est hoc mundo, non fruendum, ut invisibilia Dei per ea que facta sunt, intelligantur, hoc est, ut de temporalibus aeterna capiantur.* Aug. *ibid.*

ought to (h) use the Creatures, that we may arrive at the Creator: We may serve our selves of them, but we must alone enjoy him.

Now that which makes the whole World become Vanity, is when we break this order of Use and Fruition; when we set up any particular created Good as our End and Happiness, which ought only to be used as a means to attain it. All things in the World are in themselves good; but when we propound them as the greatest and highest Good that we expect satisfaction from, this turns them all into Vanity; and so every thing besides God, becomes nothing.

And

And thus we have a brief account whence proceeds this Vanity of the World, not from the nature of things, but from those vain hopes and expectations we build upon them, for that happiness which they cannot afford.

It remains therefore to display before you this Vanity of the World, in some more remarkable Particulars: Whereof take these following Instances.

*First*; The Vanity of the World appears in this, That all its Glory and Splendor depends meerly upon Opinion and Phancy. It is not so much what things are, as what we

*Quantum apud nos indicis margaritis pretium est, tantum apud Indos in curatio. Namq; ista persuasione gentium constant. Plin. lib. 32. de Gem. Benzoni del mondo nuovo, lib. 1.*

account them, that makes them Good or Evil : And what can be vainer than that which borrows its worth from so vain and fickle a thing as our Estimation ? And therefore we find the things of the World rated diversly, according to the esteem that Men have of them. What were Gold and Silver, had not Mens phancy stamp't upon them an excellency far beyond their natural usefulness ? This great Idol of the World was of no value among those barbarous Nations, where abundance made it vile. They preferred Glasse and Beads before it, and made that their Treasure, which we make our Scorn. They despise our Riches, and we

we theirs; and true Reason will tell us, that both the one and the other are in themselves alike despicable; and it is only phancy that puts such an immodest and extravagant price upon them, far above their natural worth. Should the whole World conspire together to depose Gold and Silver from that sovereignty they have usurped over us, they might for ever lie hid in the Bowels of the Earth, e're their true usefulness would entice any to the pains and hazard of digging them out into the Light. Indeed the whole use of what we so much dote upon, is meerly phantastical; and to make our selves needv, we have invented an artificial  
kind

\* *Ælian. l. 2.*  
*c. 14.*

kind of Riches ; which are no more necessary to the Service of Sober Nature, than Jewels and Bracelets were to that Plane-tree which \* *Xerxes* so ridiculously adorned. And altho we eagerly pursue these things, and count our selves poor and indigent without them ; yet possibly right Reason will dictate, That they are no more needful to us, than to brute or senseless Creatures ; and that it would be altogether as ridiculous for a Man to be deck'd with them, as for a Beast or Plant, were it but as uncommon. These precious trifles, when they are hung about us, make no more either to the warmth or defence of the Body, than if they were hung upon



upon a Tree they could make its Leaves more verdant, or its shade more refreshing. \* Doth any Man lie the softer, because his Bed-posts are gilt? Doth his Meat and Drink relish the better, because serv'd up in Gold? Is his House more convenient, because better carved or painted? Or are his Cloaths more fit, because more fashionable than another's? And if they are not necessary to these natural Uses, all that is left them is but Phancy and Opinion. Indeed, Mankind cozen themselves by compact, and by setting a value upon things that are

\* ταῦτα πάντα γίνε-  
ται, ἢ μὴ ποιή-  
λων ἱματίων ἔδεν τι-  
μᾶλλον θάλλειν δυ-  
ναμείων, τὰν ὃ  
χρυσόφωρον οἰκιᾶν  
ἔδεν τι μᾶλλον σκε-  
πσῶν ἢ ὃ ἐκπο-  
μάτων ἢ ἢ ἀργυρέων  
ἐν ὠφελόντων ἢ πό-  
τοι, ἔδεν ἢ χρυσῶν,  
ἔδεν τὰν ἐλεφαντί-  
νων κλινῶν ἢ ὑπνον  
ἡδύω παρεχόμενων.  
Lucian. Cynicus.

are rare, have made many think themselves poor, whereas God and Nature made all equally wealthy, had they not artificially impoverish'd themselves. It is nothing but Conceit that makes the difference between the richest and the meanest, if both enjoy Necessaries. For what are all their superfluous Riches, but a Load that Mens Covetousness lays upon them? They are but like \* Roman Slaves, that were wont to carry heavy burdens of Bread upon their Backs, whereof others eat as large a share as they. Whatsoever is more than barely to satisfy the Cravings of Nature, is of no other use but only to † look upon. Thy Lands, thy Houses,

\* ——— *Ut si  
reticulam  
panis, venales  
inter, onusto  
fortè vehas  
humero, nihilo  
plus accipias  
quam  
qui nil portarit.* Hor.  
sat. I.  
† Eccles. 5.  
II.

Houses, and fair Estate, are but Pictures of things. The poorest that sees them, enjoys as much of them as thy self: Yea, and if Men could be contented with Reason, all that they behold with their Eyes, is as much theirs as it is the Owners.

And indeed if we strip all these admired Nothings to their naked Principles, we shall find them as base and sordid as the meanest of those things which we spurn and despise; only Art or Nature put new shapes upon them, and phancy a price upon those shapes.

\* What are Gold and Silver, but diversified Earth, hard and shining Clay? The very place

\* Ὀφάλερον χρυ-  
λάειον ἔστι σαφυλὶς  
ἢ ἡ ὠκυπόρφυρος  
τριχία προβατὶς αἰ-  
ματίῳ κόσκειν δεδυ-  
μένα.

μέλα. οὕτως δ' εἶ  
 παρ' ὅλον τ' βίον ποι-  
 εῖν, ἢ ὅπως λίαν ἀξ-  
 ιοπιστάτα πράγ-  
 ματα φαντάζεται  
 ἀπορρμνεν αὐτὰ, ἢ  
 τιμὴν εὐ τέλειαν αὐτῶν  
 καθορᾶν ἢ τιμὴν ἰσ-  
 ρίαν ὑφ' ἣ σμενύνεται  
 ὡς χαιρεῖν. M. Anto.  
 de seipso, l. 6. S. 10.  
 Edit. Cas. τὸ σα-  
 πρὸν τῆς ἐκάστα ἡπο-  
 κειμένης ὕλης. ὕδωρ,  
 κόνις, ὀστέρια, γράσος  
 ἢ πᾶν, πᾶροι γῆς,  
 τὰ μέρη μακρά. καὶ ἀ-  
 ποσάθμαι ὁ χερσὸς,  
 ὁ ἄργυρος, καὶ τρι-  
 χία, ἢ ἐσθῆς καὶ αἵ-  
 μα ἢ πορφύρα. Id.  
 l. 9. S. 30. 6.

place where they are  
 bred, the Entrails of  
 the Earth, upbraids us  
 for accounting them  
 precious. The best and  
 richest Perfumes, what  
 are they but the clam-  
 my sweat of Trees, or  
 the mucous froth of  
 Beasts? The softest  
 Silks are but the Ex-  
 crement of a vile  
 Worm. The most ra-  
 cy and generous Wines,  
 are nothing else but  
 Puddle-Water strain'd  
 through a Vine. Our

choicest Delicates are but  
 Dirt, cook'd and serv'd up to  
 us in various Forms. The ve-  
 ry same things which we con-  
 temn under one shape, we ad-  
 mire

mire in another; and with this, Phancy and Custom have conspir'd together to cheat us.

Think, O worldling! when thou castest thy greedy Eyes upon thy Riches, think, here are Bags that only Phancy hath fill'd with Treasure, which else were fill'd with Dirt. Here are Trifles that only Phancy hath called Jewels, which else were no better than common Pebbles. And shall I lay the Foundation of my Content and Happiness upon a Phancy, a thing more light and wavering than the very Air?

Nay, consider, That a distemper'd Phancy can easily alter a Man's Condition, and  
put

put what shape it pleaseth upon it. If a black and sullen Melancholy seizeth the Spirits, it will make him complain of Poverty in the midst of his abundance; of pain and sickness, in the midst of his Health and Strength. 'Tis true, these are but the Effects of a distorted Phancy; but tho his Sickness and Poverty be not real, yet the torment of them is. It is all one, as to our disquiet, whether we be indeed unhappy, or only \* imagine our selves so.

\* ταράσσει  
τὸς ἀνθρώ-  
που ὃ τὰ  
πράγματα  
ἀλλὰ τὰ  
ὡς εἰ τῶν  
πραγμάτων  
δόγματα.  
Epictet. En-  
chir. c. 10.  
& dissert.  
l. 3. c. 19.

Again; If the Phancy be more merrily perverted, streight they are nothing less than Kings, or Emperors, in their own Conceit. A Straw is as majestick as a Scepter, they

they will speak of their Rags as magnificently as if they were Robes: and look upon all that come near them as their Subjects or Servants. They make every Stone a Gem, every Cottage a Palace; all they see is their own, and all their own is most excellent. Now what think you, are these things vain, or no? I doubt not but you will conclude them most extremely vain; and yet they serve their turns as well, and bring them in as much solace and contentment, as if they were really what they imagine them. Thus \* *Thrasyllus* \* *Ælian.* noted down all the Ships that arrived at the Port of *Athens*, thinking them and their Merchandize

\* ἔλεγε  
 μηδέποτε  
 ἠαδῆναι το-  
 σόν, ὅσον  
 τότε ἦδε το  
 ἐπὶ ταῖς  
 μηδὲν αὐτῶν  
 προσήκουσας  
 ναυσὶν ἀπὸ  
 σωζομένων.  
 Id. *ibid.*

chandize to be all his own. And when cured of that pleasant madness, \* confest, That he never in his whole Life enjoyed so much content, as in that conceited Wealth those Ships brought him. And indeed for my part, I know not whether these things are more vain in the phancy, or in the Reality. Such is the exceeding Vanity of all things in the World, that were it not for the Eternal Concernments of the Soul, which cannot be so well regarded under a suspension or distraction of Reason, I should make no difficulty to account and prove them the happiest Men on Earth.

If then there be so great a Power in Phancy, how vain must



must all those things be which you pursue with eagerness and impatience, since a vain Phancy without them, can give you as much satisfaction, as if you enjoyed them all: And a vain Phancy can, on the other hand, in the greatest abundance of them, make your lives as wearisome and vexatious, as if you enjoyed nothing. That is the first Demonstration.

*Secondly*; The Vanity of the World appears in its deceitfulness and treachery. It is not only Vanity, but a lying Vanity, and betrays both our Hopes, and our Souls.

It betrays our Hopes, and leaves us nothing but disappointment, when it promiseth

D 2

Satis-

II.

Pfal. 30.  
6, 7.

Satisfaction and Happiness. What strange Confidences do we build upon the false flatteries of the World? In our prosperity we sing a *Requiem* to our selves, and are ready to say, *Our Mountain is so strong, that it shall never be moved*; But within a while God hath shaken it, like that of Sinai, and wrap'd it about with Clouds and thick Darkness.

2. It betrays the Soul to Guilt and eternal Condemnation. For usually the World intangles it in strong, tho' secret and insensible Snares, and insinuates into the Heart that love of it self, which is inconsistent with the love of God. The World is the Devil's Factor, and drives on the Designs of Hell.
- The

The Apostle hath told us,  
 1 Tim. 6. 9. *They that will be  
 rich, fall into Temptation, and a  
 Snare, and many foolish and hurt-  
 ful Lusts, which drown Men in  
 Destruction and Perdition. And  
 because of the subserviency  
 of worldly enjoyments to  
 Mens Lusts, it is almost as  
 impossible a thing to moderate  
 our Affections towards them,  
 or to bound our Appetites  
 and Desires, as it is to assuage  
 the thirst of a Dropsie by  
 drinking, or to keep that Fire  
 from encreasing, into which  
 we are still casting new Fuel.  
 And therefore our Saviour  
 hath pronounced it as \* hard \* Luke 18.  
 for a rich Man to enter into Hea- 25.  
 ven, as for a Camel to go  
 through the Eye of a Needle.*

D 3

As

\* Mat. 26.  
48.

As *Judas* gave a sign to the Officers that came with him to apprehend Jesus, \* *Whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he, hold him fast*: The same sign doth the World give the Devil. Whomsoever I shall caress and favour, whomsoever I shall heap honour and riches on, whomsoever I shall embrace and kiss, the same is he, hold him fast. Such a darling of the World is too often fast bound in the silken Bands of Voluptuousness, and consigned over to be fast bound in Chains of massy Darkness.

III.

As all things in the World are lying Vanities, so are they all Vexatious. They are infamous to a Proverb, *Uncertain Comforts, but most certain Crosses.*  
And

And therefore the wise Man concludes them all to be, not only *Vanity*, but *Vexation of Spirit*.

There is a four-fold Vexatiousness in all worldly things.

There is a great deal of turmoil and trouble in getting them ; nothing can be acquired without it. The Sweat of *Adam's* Brows hath stream'd down along upon ours, and the Curse together with it, \* that in sorrow we should eat of that which Toil and Labour hath provided for us. Men rise early, and go to bed late, and eat the Bread of carefulness, and such is either their Curse, or their Folly, that they make their Lives uncomfortable,

I.  
\* Gen. 3.  
19.

D 4                      ble,

ble, only to get the Comforts of Life.

2. Whether they get them, or no, yet still they are disappointed in their Hopes. † If

† *Ex his tristitia sequitur, si aut non successit, aut successus pudet. Senec. de tranquil.*

c. 11.

they cannot compass their Designs, then they are tormented, because they fall short of what they laboured for; if they do compass them, yet still they are tormented, because what they laboured for, falls short of what they expected from it. The truth is, The World is much better in shew than substance: And those very things we admire before we enjoy them, yet afterward we find much less in them than we expected. As he that sees a falling Star shoot through the Air, and draw after it a long train

train of Light, runs to the place; and thinking to get some bright and glittering thing, catches up nothing but a filthy Jelly; such is the disappointment we find in our pursuit after the enjoyments of this World: They make a glorious shew at a distance, but when we come near them, we find our Hopes deluded, and nothing upon the place but a vile Slime.

*Thirdly*; They are all Vexation while we enjoy them. Be it what it will that we possess of the World, it is but by fits at most, that we take any great pleasure in it: And then, what between Cares and Designs to secure the continuance of it, and

3.

and fears of losing it, the comfort of enjoying it is wholly swallowed up. \* For

\* Ἡ γὰρ σφοδρὰ  
 ὡς ἐκαστον ἐπι-  
 θυμία σφοδρότατον  
 φόβον ἐκποιῶσα τῷ  
 μὴ παρ᾽ μένειν, ἀ-  
 δυνῇ τιτὸν χεῖρον ποιεῖ  
 καὶ ἀβέβαιον, ὥσπερ  
 φλόγα, καταπνεο-  
 μένῃ. Plut. de  
 tranquil.

strong Affections be-  
 getting strong Fears,  
 do always lessen the  
 delight of present En-  
 joyments. This is the  
 unhappiness of all  
 things in the World,  
 that if we set any price

and value upon them, we lose  
 much of the sweetness of  
 them, by fearing to lose them.

4. *Fourthly*; They are all Vex-  
 atious, as in their Enjoyment,  
 so especially in their Loss.  
 Whatever we set our Hearts  
 upon, we may assure our  
 selves, and experience will  
 teach it us, that the pleasure  
 of possessing it, will not near  
 coun-



countervail the bitterness of losing it. And as if God had on purpose so ordained it, to take off our Hearts from the World, the better we esteem any thing, the more Vanity and Vexation shall we find in it ; for the more will our Care and Perplexity in keeping it, and the more our Grief and Torment in losing it be increased. That's a third Demonstration.

*Fourthly* ; The Vanity of the World appears in this, That a little Cross will embitter great Comforts. One *dead Flie* is enough to corrupt a whole Box of the World's most fragrant *Ointment*. How much will only the aking of a Tooth,

a fit of the Stone or Gout deaden and dishearten us, to all the Joys and Pleasures of Life? Certainly, the World must needs be vain, that cannot bear out the brunt of a little pain or sickness. The least cross Accident is enough to discompose all our Delights. And indeed there are so many Ingredients required

to make up worldly Felicity, † Riches, Health, Friends, Honour, good Name, and the like; that if any of these be wanting, the whole Composition is spoiled; and we shall take advantage against our selves to conclude we are miserable. For such

† φαίνεται καὶ τῇ  
ἐκτὸς ἀγαθῶν προσ-  
δεομένη (εὐδαιμο-  
νία) ἐνίων τητῶμε-  
νοι εὐπαίνοσι τὸ  
μακάριον, οἷον ἀγα-  
θεῖας, ἀτεχνίας, καὶ ἁ-  
λως. οὐ πάνυ γὰρ  
εὐδαιμονικὸς ὁ τῶν  
ἰδεῖαν πανάχνης, ἢ  
δυσγενὲς, ἢ μονά-  
της καὶ ἀτεχνῆς.  
Ari. E. l. i. c. 8. &  
l. io. c. 8.

such is the peevishness of our Nature, that if we have not all we would, we take no content in any thing we have. And besides, we are apt † to slide off from the smoother part of our Lives, as Flies from Glass, and to stick only on the rougher Passages. For neither is Sense capable to be so much or so long affected with the Impressions of Pleasure, as of pain, (since never could there yet be any Delights invented as piercing, as there are many Torments) nor yet is our busy remembrance so officious in calling back the pleasant Passages of

† Τὸ τοῦ τῶ ὀπιθιμίου ὀπιταρσίσει. ὅταν ὡς περ αἱ μυῖαι τῇ λείωντόπων ἐν τοῖς κατώτεροις ἀπολαύουσιν, τὰς ὀτρυχίται προσέχονται καὶ ταῖς ἀμυχαῖς ὥτως ἀνθρώποι τῇ ἡλαρῶν καὶ προσώων ἀπορρέοντες, ἐμπλέκονται ταῖς τῇ ἀνδῶν ἀναμνήσεσι. Plutarch. de tranquil.

our

our days to our review, as those that have been more gloomy and dolorous. And though it be our sin to look more upon the Crosses we find, than the Comforts we enjoy ; yet here we may likewise see how vain a thing it is for us to expect Happiness and Contentment from the World, whose Crosses as they are more, so they are more considerable than its Comforts.

V. Fifthly, consider, The longer we enjoy any worldly thing, the more flat and insipid doth it grow : We are soon at the bottom, and find nothing but Dregs there. In all the Pleasures of Life, either

either our Spirits sink and fall under the continuance of them, as not able to bear a constant tension and emotion; or the Delight consists meerly in the novelty and variety of the Objects, which when we are made more familiar with, are but dull, because ordinary: And so they either tire our Appetites, or deceive our Hopes. And therefore the most artificial Voluptuaries have always allowed themselves an intermission in their Pleasures, to recruit Nature, and sharpen their sensual Desires, without which they would but cloy and surfeit; and instead of Pleasures, prove only a waste and oppression to the Spirits.

† *Epicurus*

† *Certos habebat dies ipse magister voluptatis Epicurus, quibus malignè famem extingueret.* Sen. Ep. 18. *Ep. ad Menaceum apud Diog. Laert.* in vitâ Eunici. το σὺν ἡσιν ἐν ἀπλῆς καὶ πολυτελεῖσι διαίταις ταῖς πολυτελεῖσιν ἐκ διαλειμμάτων, πρόσσχευμαῖς, καὶ πόνον ἡμᾶς διατίθουσι.

ing that the pleasure of Gluttony, could never be so much enhanc'd as by an interval of Hunger.

For what is a furnish'd Table to him whose constant Meals overtake one another, but only the heaping of Food upon Crudities and Indigestion? What the Titles of Honour to a Person born Noble?

† *Epicurus* himself, the great Master and Servant of Pleasure, who made it the highest Good & chiefest Happiness of Man, set himself certain days of Abstinence in course, wherein he would but niggardly satisfy his Stomach, well know-

ble? They signify no more to him, than it doth to another Man, when he hears himself called by his ordinary Name. What is respect and honour to a Man long accustomed to it? It brings him no great content when he hath it, but torments him when he fails of it. Give these things to those that are unacquainted with them, if you would have them valued. Bring a poor Man to a Table of Delicates; invest an ignoble Person with Honours and Dignities; give respect to a despised Person, and for the present you bless them. But Time and Custom will wear off this Content: And the tediousness even of such a Life as this, will make them

† ——— *Sunt talis quoque tedia vite Magna. Voluptates commendat rarior usus. Juv. Sat. II.*

E

wil-

\* *Non exi-  
stimes me du-  
cere te ad  
modicas ca-  
nas & pan-  
perum cellas,  
& quicquid  
aliud est per  
quod luxuri-  
a, divitia-  
rum radio  
ludit. Sen.  
Ep. 18.*

willing at least for their Diver-  
tisement and Recreation to

\* retire to their homely Cells  
and Station. For as it is  
with those that are accustomed  
to strong Perfumes, they them-  
selves cannot scent those O-  
dours, which to others that  
use them not, are most sweet  
and fragrant: So it fares with  
us in the long continuance of  
worldly Enjoyments; our  
Senses are so stult and even  
suffocated with them, that we  
cannot perceive them; and  
unless we purchase Pleasures  
by alternate Sorrow, they are  
but lost upon us. Now how  
vain must the World needs be,  
whose Comforts are not valu-  
able while we have them, but  
while we have them not? And  
how



how vain are those Joys for which we must pay down as much Grief, as the Joys themselves are worth? So that upon ballancing the Accompt, there remains nothing to us: And it had been altogether as good to have enjoyed nothing.

VI:

Again, Consider, all the Pleasure of the World, is nothing else but a tedious repetition of the same things. Our Life consists in a † round of Actions, and what can be duller than still to be doing the same things over and over again? Ask the most frolick Gallant, whose only study it is how he may pass his time merrily, and live happily:

† Πάντα ἐξ' αἰδὶς  
ὀμοειδῶς καὶ ἀνακυ-  
κλῶμενα καὶ ὁδὸν  
διαφέρει πότερ' ἐν  
ἑκατον ἔπουν, ἢ ἐν  
διακροσίοις ἢ ἐν τῶ  
ἀπειρῶ χρόνῳ τὰ  
αὐτὰ τίς ὀψεται.

Antonin. l.2. S.12.

E 2

ly:

ly: What account can he give of his Pleasures, but that from his Bed, he riseth to his Table, from his Table to his Sports, from them he tumbles into his Bed again? This is the most gentile and fashionable Life. And are these the great Joys that a World so prized and so admired can afford? One half of his pleasant Life he spends in sleep, a dull state, which we may rather reckon to Death than Life. The other half he spends in clogging his Appetite, and tiring his Body, and then to sleep again. What generous and noble Designs are these! Fit for high Spirits and high Births; while the contemptible Peasants are left to do the Drudgery of the World,

World, and to be the only serviceable Men in it. Nay, rather what a pittiful Circle is this, still to be doing the same things, and things which we have before search'd and often found all that is in them. So that even a Heathen \* could say, That only a valiant or a miserable Man might desire to die, but a nice and delicate Man, as disdaining the irksome repetition of the same things.

\* *Cogita  
quamdiu ea-  
dem facias.  
Cibus, som-  
nus, libido.  
Mori velle,  
non tantum  
prudens &  
fortis aut mi-  
ser, sed eti-  
am fastidio-  
sus potest.  
Sen. Ep. 77.*

Seventhly; The Vanity of VII.  
the World appears in this,  
That it can stand us in no  
stead, then when we have the  
greatest need of support and  
comfort. There be two Sea-  
sons especially, in which the

E 3      Soul

Soul wants relief and comfort, and they are in trouble of Conscience, and at the hour of death. Now in each of these the World shews it self to be exceeding vain and useless.

1. First ; The World appears to be vain, when we are under trouble of Conscience. What choice Comforts the Soul then stands in need of, those who have felt the sting and terrors of it, can best tell. The torments they then feel, next to those of the damned, are the most intollerable, and the most unutterable. God sets them up as his Mark, and shoots his Arrows, dipt in flaming Poison, into the very midst of their Souls. He kindles a secret

cret Fire in them, that consumes their Bones, dries up their Marrow, and scorches their Entrals; and such is the spreading Rage of it, that oftentimes it smoaks out at their Mouths in despairing Outcries.

*The Spirit of a Man*, (saith Solomon, Prov. 18. 14.) *will bear his Infirmary*; i. e. The natural chearfulness and vivacity of a Man's Spirit, will enable him to bear up under bodily pains; *But a wounded Spirit who can bear?* When our Propit self is broken, we must needs sink, and fall under the most gloomy apprehensions that Guilt and Hell can create in a Soul already sing'd with those Eternal Flames into

E 4      which

which with unspeakable horror it daily expects to be plunged. Oh! think what exact torture thou must needs endure, when God shall make deep wounds in thy Spirit, and let fall great Drops of his burning Wrath, on that part of thy Soul that is infinitely more tender and sensible than the Apple of thine Eye. Imagine what sharp and intollerable pains those *Martyrs* sustained, who (as the *Apostle* tells us, *Heb. 11. 37. Were sawn asunder.* Or suppose that thou thy self wert now under the ragged Teeth of a Saw, drawn to and fro upon the tendrest parts of thy Body, tearing thy Flesh, thy Nerves, and Sinews; grating and jar-  
ring

ring upon thy very Bones : Yet all the extremity of this, is nothing to what Torments the Conscience feels, when God causeth his Sword to enter into it, to rive it up ; when he makes deep and bloody wounds in it, and instead of pouring in healing Balm, with an heavy Hand chafes them with Fire and Brimstone.

Now in such a time of anguish and distress as this, What is there that can relieve the afflicted Soul ? The Worldling that heaps up his ill-gotten Treasures, and wallows in thick Clay, when God comes to ransack his Conscience, and to set before him the Guilt of his Sins, will then know with  
terror

\* Job 13.  
26.

terror and amazement, that there is a Justice which Gold and Silver cannot bribe. The voluptuous Person will no longer relish any savouriness in his carnal Delights, when once God \* *writes bitter things against him.* What is Mirth and Musick to him that can now hear nothing but the screeches of his own Conscience? What is a full Cup to him, that can now taste nothing but the Cup of Fury and Trembling? Little content will the Noble take in his honourable Titles, if all this while his Conscience call him Reprobate. A Title of Honour will no more abate the Torments of Conscience, than it doth mitigate *Belzebub's* tor-



torments to be stiled Prince of the Devils. All the World's Hony will not serve to allay the invenomed stings of Conscience. That's a fiery Serpent, a deaf Adder, that will not be charm'd by all the alluring Pleasures of the World. These are vain and impertinent to one whose thoughts are wholly possess'd with the fear of Wrath and Hell, from which these cannot deliver him. When God makes a Wound in the Spirit, the whole World cannot make a Plaister broad enough to cover it.

Secondly ; The World is a 2.  
vain and useless thing at the hour of Death. Possibly, many of us may never conflict with

with the terrors of Conscience, nor have that conviction of the World's Vanity: But yet we must all conflict with Death, that *King of Terrors*. Suppose therefore (what must certainly once be) that we were now gasping our last, our Tongues faltering, our Eye-strings breaking, our Limbs quivering, a dead cold and stiffness invading us; were our Souls tost to and fro upon our expiring Breath, and like Wrecks at Sea, sometimes cast up, and by and by suck't back again, What could stand us in stead, and make our passage happy at such a time as this? Now the Soul requires the strongest, the richest Cordials. Prepare it one mingled

led of the best Ingredients the whole World can afford ; Cast into the Cup Riches, Honour, Pleasure, the Quintessence of all that is here desirable, yet alas ! What is all this World to a dying Man who is just leaving it ?

Thy wicked Companions, with whom thou hast laught and sinn'd away thy freshest Years, will in this thy last extremity forsake thee ; or if they do attend so sad a Spectacle ; alas, What miserable comforters will they be ? They will then prove another bad Conscience to thee, and bring to thy remembrance with horror the sins which thou hast committed by their enticement, or they by thine. Thy  
mirth

*Non domus  
& fundus,  
non aris &  
cervus &  
auri, Egro-  
to domini  
deduxit cor-  
pore febris,  
Non animo  
curas. Ho-  
rat. Ep. 2.*

mirth and jollity, will then be turned into groans and howlings: All things will stare ruthfully upon thee, and when thou callest upon them for help, confess their impotency to rescue thee from the gripe of Death, and from the doom of Justice.

Sickness is usually a busy time with Conscience, and when it is packing up for a remove into the other World, it will be sure to gather together all the Sins of a Man's Life, and bind them as an heavy and insupportable burden upon his Soul. Can thy sensual Pleasures divert thee now? As they have served thee to pass away the tediousness of Time, can they serve

to pass away the infinite tediousness of Eternity? Nay, how can it otherwise be, but that a mind long soak'd and softned by these, should be made the more capable of receiving deep impressions of Grief, Anguish, and Despair?

Indeed, while we eagerly pursue any of these worldly Enjoyments, we are but running after a Shadow: And as Shadows vanish, and are swallowed up in the greater shade of Night; so when the Night of Death shall cast its thick Shade about us, and wrap us up in deep and substantial Darkness, all these vain Shadows will then disappear and vanish quite out of sight.

Now could we have the  
same

same Opinion of the World in the time of our Health and Prosperity, as we shall certainly have when we lie languishing and drawing on to Eternity, we should be able then with a generous scorn to live above it and despise it. Shall we prize those Comforts, which will be none to us, when we have the greatest need of Comfort? Shall we glue our Affections to that which either is so faithless that it will not, or so weak that it cannot help us? So vain a thing is it, that it cannot resist the disgrace that sleep or only winking doth. Shut but your Eyes, and what becomes of all the pomp and lustre, the beauty and splendor that  
we

we so much admire in the World? It all vanisheth into Darknes and Nothing. Sleep snatcheth us from it; and for the time, we have no more enjoyment of it than if we were dead. Every Night we die in our Beds, and yet every Day are so immerst in the Pleasures and Busineses of the World, as if we were never to die indeed. Since therefore we have higher and nobler Objects to fix our Affections on, let us not lavish them out upon these worldly Vanities, which can at no time prove real Comforts unto us; and then least of all, when we have most need of comfort. That's a seventh Demonstration.

F

Again,

VIII. Again; All things in the World are vain, because they are unsuitable. True indeed, they are suited to the Necessities of the Body, and serve to feed and cloath that; but He is a Beast, or worse, that reckons himself provided for, when only his bodily Wants are supplied. Have we not all of us precious and immortal Souls, capable and desirous of Happiness? Do not these crave to be satisfied? Do they not deserve to be heard? Shall our vile Bodies which are but Dust and Worms-meat, engross all our care how to please and pamper them, and shall the Necessities of our never-dying Souls be neglected? What



What have you laid up in store for these? Alas! That which most Men busy themselves about, is to heap up temporal Riches, *To join House to House, Isa. 5. 3. and Land to Land, that they might dwell alone upon the Earth.* But know, thou dost but give thy Soul Husks and Swines-meat, when thou settest the whole World before it.

And therefore our Saviour justly brands the Rich Man in the Gospel for a Fool, that when he had stufte up his Barns with Corn, said to his Soul, \* Soul, \* Luk. 12. 19 *thou hast much Goods laid up for many Years.* A Fool indeed to measure the Soul's Goods by the Barn, or by the Bushel. The very same is the folly of most Men, who think they

are in all respects well provided for, if they can but scrape together a great Estate, whereas the Soul can no more live upon these things, than the Body can upon a thought or notion.

There is a three-fold unfruitableness, between worldly things and the Soul.

- I. First; The Soul is Spiritual, these are drossy and material. Of all things belonging to a Man, his Breath is the most subtile, invisible, and spiritual. But now the Soul is called the \* *Breath of God*, and therefore must needs be Spiritual in a high degree. And what then hath a spiritual Soul to do with Clods of Earth, or Acres of Land, with Barns full

\* Gen.2.7.

full of Corn, or Bags full of Gold? These are too thick and gross to correspond with its refined Nature. But rather bring Spiritual Things to Spiritual. God who is the † *Father of Spirits*, his Love † Heb. 12.9. and Favour, an Interest in him, and Communion with him, the Consolations of the Holy Ghost, the Actings of Grace, and the Hopes of Glory; these Spiritual and Clarified Essences, which a carnal Eye cannot see, nor a carnal Judgment value; these are most suitable to the Soul, that is a Spirit, and ought not to be unequally yoked to the Dregs and Dross of Earthly Enjoyments.

2. Secondly; The Soul is immortal, but all worldly Things are perishing, and wear out in the using. And therefore it was but small Comfort, when the rich Man sung his *Requiem*, to say, *Soul, take thy ease, thou hast Goods laid up for many Years.* Thou Fool! What is an Estate for many Years, to a Soul whose duration is not measured by Years, but by Eternity? What when those Years of Plenty are expired? How destitute will thy Soul be when it shall have out-lived all its good things? It may out-live them, even in this World. God may nip and blast all that thou settest thy Heart on, and make all thy Comforts fall off from thee, like so many withered  
thered

thered Leaves. However, if thou hast no other than what this miserable World can afford, thou shalt certainly outlive them in the World to come: And what wilt thou do, not in those Years, but in that Eternity of Famine?

As it is with those that are invited to feast in some noble Family, the Furniture is rich, the Entertainment splendid and magnificent; but when they depart, they cannot of all that Pomp and Bravery, carry any thing away with them: So is it here; the World is God's great House, richly furnish'd, and we well entertain'd in it; we have all things liberally afforded us for our

F 4 use;

use ; but nothing of all is ours. And therefore God hath set that grim Porter, Death, at his Gate, to see that as we brought nothing into it, so we carry nothing out of it. What a sad parting-hour will it be to the Soul, when it must go into another World, and leave all that it admired and loved, behind in this ? How will it protract, and linger ? How loth will it be to enter upon so great a Journey, and carry nothing to defray the Charges of it ? Certainly, dying must needs be a terrible thing to those who have gotten nothing but what they can no longer keep, when their Souls must be set on shore in a vast and black Eternity, all  
naked

naked and destitute, having nothing to relieve or support them.

Thirdly; The Necessities of the Soul, are altogether of another kind, than those which worldly things are able to supply; and therefore they are wholly unsuitable. Natural Things may well serve for natural Wants. Food will satisfy Hunger; and Raiment fence off the Injuries of the Weather, and Riches will procure both. But the Soul's Necessities are Spiritual, and these no Natural Thing can reach. It wants a Price to redeem it; nothing can do this but the precious Blood of Christ. It wants Pardon and Forgiveness; nothing can grant it, but

but the free and abundant Mercy of God. It wants Sanctification and Holiness, Comfort and Assurance; nothing can effect these but the Holy Ghost. Here all worldly things fall short. The Exigencies of the outward Man they may supply; but the greatest abundance of them, can never quiet a troubled Conscience, nor appease an angry God, nor remove the condemning Guilt of the least Sin: No, *The Redemption of the Soul is precious* (more precious than to be purchased by these poor things) *and it ceaseth for ever.*

Psal. 49. 8.

Possibly now in the time of your Peace and Prosperity, you regard not these spiritual Wants ;



Wants ; but when the days of Sorrow and Darknes shall come upon you, when God shall drop into your Consciences a little of his Wrath and Displeasure, you may as well seek to cure a Wound in your Body, by applying a Plaister to your Garment, as seek to ease a wounded Spirit by all the Treasures, Pleasures, and Enjoyments of this World.

*Riches (saith the Wise Man)* Prov. 11. 4.  
*profit not in the day of Wrath :*  
For indeed they cannot reach the Soul to bring any true solace to it.

Thus you see how unsuitable the World is to the Soul. Unsuitable to the Nature of it, for the Soul is Spiritual, but all Earthly Enjoyments  
are

are drossie and material ; the Soul is immortal, but these are all perishing : Unsuitable also to the Necessities of the Soul, which they can never reach nor supply.

- IX. Again ; The Vanity of the World appears in its Inconstancy and Fickleness. God's Providence administers all Things here below in perpetual Vicissitudes. His Hand turns them about like so many *Wheels*, (to which they are compared, *Ezek. 1.*) the same part is now uppermost, and anon lowermost ; now lifted up in the Air, and by and by grated through the Mire. This is the mutable condition of the World. And there-

therefore we find it compared to the *Moon*, Rev. 12. 1. where the Church is described to be *Cloathed with the Sun, and to have the Moon* (that is, the World) *under her feet*. And well may it bear the resemblance, for it is still waxing and waning, sometimes full of brightness, at other times scarce a small streak of Light to be discerned. There are none of us but have had experience in some kind or other, of the inconstancy of these sublunary Enjoyments. When the Sun shines bright and warm, all the Flowers of the Field open and display their Leaves, to receive him into their Bosoms; but when Night comes, they fold together, and shut up all  
their

their Glories : And though they were like so many little Suns shining here below, able, one would think, to force a day for themselves ; yet when the Sun withdraws his Beams, they droop, and hang the Head, and stand neglected, dull and obscure Things. So hath it fared with us : While God hath shone upon us with warm and cherishing Influences, we opened and spread, and flourish'd into a great Pomp and Glory : But he only hides his Face, draws in his Beams, and all our beautiful Leaves shut up, or fall to the Ground, and leave us a bare Stalk, poor and contemptible.

Or

Or if there have been no such considerable Mutations in what concerns us, yet the Revolutions that God hath of late Years brought upon others, so beyond Expectation or Example, may well instruct us in the Vanity of the World, and make us no less condemn it, than admire that infinite Wisdom that governs it.

It is said of the *Wheels*, Ezek. 1. 17. *That they went upon their four sides.* For one Wheel intersecting and crossing another, the whole must needs consist of four Sides or Semicircles: And moving upon these four sides, it must of necessity move very ruggedly, by jolts and jerks. So truly the Providences of God  
do

do sometimes move unevenly, as cross Wheels would do moving upon their sides. Great and suddain Changes are often brought to pass without being ripened by sensible Degrees ; but happen by the surprisal of some unexpected Providence, and, as it were, by the suddain jerk of the Wheel, shaking off those who sate on the top, and crushing them in its passage over.

'Tis true, these Mutations which to us seem so confused and tumultuary, are all orderly and harmonious in the Divine Counsel and Foreknowledg. There is not a Providence that breaks its Rank, nor a Wheel that moves out of its Tract ; and there is

a destined End for them all, the Glory of the Almighty Creator ; to which, while every Creature pursues its own Inclinations, he sweetly, and yet efficaciously sways them. They are all like Arrows shot at a Mark by an unerring Hand: Some are shot point-blank, and some by compass, but none so carelessly as to miss it. Though Changes may surprize us, yet they do not surprize God: But as it is a great pleasure to us, to see our Designs and Forecasts accomplished; so infinite Wisdom delights it self to look on, and see how all things start up into their Place and Order, as soon as called forth by his efficacious Decree and Fore-  
G know-

knowledg. Among all the weighty and arduous Cares of Governing the World, it is (if I may so exprefs it) the Recreation of Providence, to amuse Mankind with some wonderful Events; that when we cannot find out the Connexion and Dependance of second Causes, we may humbly acquiesce in adoring the absolute Sovereignty of the First: And by observing the Mutations of Affairs here below, may be taught to repose our selves in him who only is immutable. Thus God administers the various Accurrences of the World according to the Counsel of his own Will; and makes the inconstancy of it, serve both for



for his Delight and our Admonition.

It is in vain therefore to expect happiness from what is so uncertain. All the Comforts of it are but like fading Flowers, that while we are looking on them, and smelling to them, die, and wither in our Hands. Is it Pleasures we seek? These must vary: For where there is not an intermission, it is not pleasure, but a glut and surfeit. And hence it is that they who are used to hardships, taste more sweetness in some ordinary Pleasures, than those who are accustomed to a voluptuous Life, do in all their exquisite and invented Delights. Do you pursue Honour and Applause

in the World? This hangs upon the wavering Tongues of the Multitude: To follow this, is but to pursue a puff of Wind, and of all Winds in Nature the most fickle and changeable. The People's *Hosanna*, and Crucify, are oft pronounced in the same breath. And besides that it is

\* Ἐπαινεῖ-  
σιν καὶ ῥη-  
ματίζουσιν  
αὐτὸν οἱ  
πολλοὶ τῆς  
ἐκκλησίας  
κατὰ τὴν  
ἀνθρώπου  
φύσιν. Ant.  
1.8. Sect. 44.

\* no great matter that those should think or speak well of thee, who have but too much reason to think ill of themselves; besides this, consider how soon publick Fame grows out of breath. Possibly an Age or two may talk of thee, but this Bruit is but like successive Eccho's, that render the Voice still weaker and weaker, till at length it vanisheth into

into silence. Yea, couldst thou fill whole Chronicles with thy Story, yet Time or Moths will eat thee out : And

the † fresher remembrance of other Mens Actions wil bury thine in Oblivion. Is it Riches you desire ? These too are uncertain ; 1 Tim. 6. 17.

† ὅς αἰσθῆς ἀμνηστῶν ἀλλὰς ἐπιφωτισμένην καὶ πρῶτον τὰ πρότερα ἵστας ἐν τῷ εἶναι πρότερον καὶ τῶ ἐπεχθῆναι τὰς αἰσθῆς ἐν αἰσθῆσι. Id. l. 7. S. 23.

Charge them that they trust not in uncertain Riches. Uncertain they are in getting, and uncertain in keeping when got. All our Treasures are like Quick-silver, which strangely slips between our Fingers when we think we hold it fastest. Riches,

( \* saith the wise Man ) make \* Prov. 23. 5 themselves Wings, and fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven ;

G 3 and

† "Ὡστερ εἰ τις π  
 ᾧ παραπέτο μύρων  
 σκευῶν φιλεῖν ἀρ-  
 χήτο, τὸ δ' ἔτι ἐξ  
 ὀφθαλμῶν ἀπελή-  
 λυσιν. *Id. Lib. 6.*  
*Seet. 11.* The same  
 with that of *Solo-*  
*mon, Wilt thou set*  
*thine Eyes upon that*  
*which is not? &c.*

and it were a most  
 strangely folly † to fall  
 passionately in love  
 with a Bird upon his  
 Wing, who is free and  
 unconfined as the Air  
 in which he flies, and  
 will not stoop to thy  
 Call or Lure. How  
 much better were it,  
 since they will fly, for thy self  
 to direct their flight towards  
 Heaven, by relieving the ne-  
 cessitous Servants and Mem-  
 bers of Jesus Christ. Then  
 will their flight be happy and  
 glorious, when they carry on  
 their Wings the Prayers and  
 Blessings of the Poor, whose  
 Bowels thou hast refreshed.  
 This is to lay up Treasure in  
 Heaven, to remit thy Monies  
 to

to the other World, where they shall be truly paid thee, with abundant Interest. This is to lay up a Stock for hereafter, that thou mayest have whereon to live splendidly and gloriously to all Eternity. And thus to lay out, is to lay up, to lay up uncertain Riches in a safe Repository : God's Promises shall be thy security, and every Star in Heaven, a Seal set upon the Treasury-door which none can break or violate.

Thus you see how mutable and inconstant all worldly Things are. So that we may truly apply that which the *Psalmist* speaks of the Earth in another sense, That God hath *Psal. 24. 2.*  
*founded it upon the Sea, and esta-*

G 4      *blish'd*

*blish'd it upon the Floods.* Such is the waving, and fluctuation of all things here below, that they are no more constant, than if they were meerly built upon the ebbing and flowing of the Tide.

- X. *Lastly;* The Vanity of the World appears in this, That it is altogether unsatisfactory. That must needs be Vain, which when we enjoy it in its greatest abundance, can give us no real nor solid content. Such an empty thing is the whole World. You may as soon grasp a bundle of Dreams, or take up an Arm-full of your own Shadow, as fill the vast and boundless desires of your Souls with these earthly

earthly Enjoyments. And therefore the *Psalmist* speaking of prosperous Sinners, sets forth their state by the most thin and empty things imaginable; *Psalm. 73. 30. As a Dream when one awakes, so, O Lord, thou shalt despise their Image,* The Images and Representations that a Dream makes, seem very brisk and lively; but when we reflect upon them with our waking Thoughts, we find them confused and impertinent. Such is all the prosperity of this World, it is but as the Image and Fiction of a Dream.

\* As an hungry Man that dreams he is at a furnish'd Table, and fills himself with all varieties of Delicates, how joyful

joyful, and how pleas'd is he, how fully satisfied, if he were not to wake again ! But some one jogs or calls him ; he wakes, and finds himself hunger-starv'd, nothing fed but his Fancy. So is it with us in this World. While the Soul lies under the Coverlet of this Body, it sleeps : And one thinks himself Rich ; another, Great and Noble ; a third, Learned and Wise : But alas ! All this is only a Dream : When either Afflictions, or Death, make a noise, and call upon him, the sleepy Soul awakes, and finds it self empty and hunger-starv'd, after all the imaginary store it enjoyed.

Now, the Unsatisfactoriness of the World, may be clearly



clearly evinced by these two things.

First ; In that the highest 1.  
Condition we can attain unto,  
cannot free us from Cares and  
Crosses. Yea indeed it is so far  
from freeing us, that it rather  
encreaseth them, It doth but  
make us spread the wider, and  
stand the fairer mark for trou-  
ble. And yet we are like Chil-  
dren, that think the Sky lies  
on yonder Hill ; thither they  
run, hoping to touch it there :  
When they come, they find it  
dislodg'd to another Hill ;  
after it they run, and pursue it  
from Hill to Hill, and after  
all their pains and sweat, find  
themselves as far below it as at  
first : So it fares with us. We  
think Happiness, and true  
Con-

Content lies in some condition above us. Thither we hasten, hoping we shall reach it there. When we arrive thither, we find, the Happiness we sought for is dislodg'd, and seems to us to rest in a Condition above that: But when we attain this too, still we are as far below Happiness and Satisfaction, as we were in our lowest Estate.

When we change our outward Condition, be it to never so great advantage, we do not lose, but only change our Cares. If we are freed from the Cares and Crosses of a poor and private Life; we fall into those of a pompous and envied Greatness, which are both more numerous, and  
more

more oppressive.\* The Man that lies most compacted, and in least compass in the World, is like to scape best: Whereas the great Ones, that take up much room, do only shew in how many Places, and Concernments, they are liable to be wounded. It is not therefore any thing in this World that can give you satisfaction. All the Enjoyments of it are to the Soul, as Wind to the Stomach, they may gripe it, but they can never satisfy it. Indeed so vain are they, that they scarce have any other proof of their Rea-

\* *Angustanda sunt patrimonía, ut minús ad injurias fortune simus expositi. Habiliora sunt corpora in bello, quæ in arma sua contrahi possunt, quàm quæ superfunduntur, & undiquè magnitudo sua vulneribus objicit. Sen. de tranq. c. 8. Cogende in arctum res sunt, ut telum in vanum cadat. Id. c. 9.*

lity,

lity, but the pain and torment they bring with them.

Secondly; The World appears to be unsatisfactory, in

that be our Condition what it will, yet still we desire change. We can no more rest in an high Estate, than in a Low; but still we desire something further, and something better.

\* As sick Men toſs to and fro, from ſide to ſide, thinking to find eaſe, by changing their poſture; whereas it is not their outward Poſture, but their inward Diſtemper, that is the cauſe of their reſtleſſneſs: So do we endea-

your

\* "Ὡς περ οἱ δειλοὶ  
καὶ ναυτιῶντες ἐν ταῖς  
πλείν, εἴτα ῥᾶον αἰό-  
μηροι διάξουσιν ἐὰν  
εἰς γαυλὸν ἐξ ἀκα-  
τα, καὶ πάλιν ἐὰν εἰς  
τειρήν μεταβῶσιν, οὐ-  
δὲν περσίνουσι, τὴν  
χολὴν καὶ τὴν δειλίαν  
συμμεταφέροντες ἐ-  
αυτοῖς· οὕτως αἱ ἡ-  
βίων ἀντιμεταλή-  
ψαις οὐκ ἐξαίρουσι τῆς  
ψυχῆς τὰ λυπώδη  
καὶ τὰ πόθηοντα ταῦ-  
τα ὅτι εἰς ἀπειρίαν  
ἡ περσμάτων, ἀ-  
λογισία, τὸ μηδὲν κα-  
ταδοῦναι, μηδὲ ἐπιτα-  
δοῦναι χρῆσθαι τοῖς  
παροῦσι οὐδὲν. Plut.  
*de Tranquil. Animi.*

your to change and shift Con-  
 ditions in the World, and lie  
 sometimes in one posture, and  
 sometimes in another, but yet  
 are restless in all ; for where-  
 soe're we tumble, we carry  
 our Disease with us, false  
 Opinions, and foolish Hopes,  
 and impotent Desires, and  
 fond Designes, which make  
 us complain of our present  
 State, and wish the amend-  
 ment of that, when nothing  
 wants Cure but our selves.

† οἱ δὲ δὲ-  
 μέντοι ἐν-  
 δαιμονίζουσι  
 τὰς λελυ-  
 μένας, ἐ-  
 κείνοι δὲ τὰς  
 ἐλδὲ θέρουσι.

† The Servant thinks he  
 shall be a happy Man when  
 he is made free. Is the Free-

οἱ δὲ ἐλδὲ-  
 θεοῖς  
 τὰς πολί-  
 τας, οὗτοι δὲ  
 πάλιν αὖ

τὰς πλοῦτας· οἱ δὲ πλοῦστοι, τὰς σαύρατας· οἱ δὲ σα-  
 τράπαι τὰς βασιλεῖς· οἱ δὲ βασιλεῖς τὰς θεοὺς μονο-  
 νυχί βροντᾶν, καὶ ἀστράπτειν ἐθέλοντες. εἴτα ἕως αἰ-  
 ῶνος ἑαυτοὺς ἐνδεεῖς ὄντες, ὁδὲ ποτε τοῖς καθ' ἑαυ-  
 τὸς χαρίν ἔχουσιν, &c. Plut. Ib.

man

man happy ? No : But he shall be, when he hath gotten such an Estate. Is the Rich Man happy ? No : But he shall be when he is invested with such an Honour and Dignity. Well ; Is the Honourable Man happy ? No : Unless he be Supream. And those who are Supream, cannot think themselves compleatly happy, unless they be Universal Monarchs, And those who were so, we find they could not rest there, but would needs be adored for Gods. Oh whither do the boundless Desires of Men hurry them ! Nothing in this World can put a stop to them.

It was a pertinent Discourse of *Cineas*, dissuading *Pyrrhus* from undertaking a War against the *Romans* : Sir, (saith he) When you have conquer'd them, what will you do next ? Then *Sicily* is near at hand, and easy to master. And what when you have subdued *Sicily* ? Then we'll pass over to *Africk*, and take *Carthage*, which cannot long withstand us. When these are conquer'd, what will be your next attempt ? Then (saith *Pyrrhus*) we'll fall in upon *Greece*, and *Macedon*, and recover what we have lost there. Well, when all are subdued, what Fruit do you expect from all your Victories ? Then (saith he) we'll sit down and  
H            enjoy

Plutarch. in  
vitâ Pyrrhi.

enjoy our selves. Sir, (replies *Cineas*) May we not do it now? Have you not already a Kingdom of your own? And he that cannot enjoy himself with a Kingdom, cannot with the whole World. Such are the Designs of Men, and so we may answer them. Most are projecting how they may get such an Estate; then how they may raise themselves to Honour, and think that their advancement in both, will bring them satisfaction. Alas! This will not do. Their desires will still run before them: And they may as well sit down content vvhhere they are, as vvhhere they hope to be.

And



And the reason of this unsatisfactoriness in worldly things, is because none of them are so good as the Soul is. The Soul, next to Angels, is the very Top and Cream of the whole Creation, other things are but Dregs and Lees compared to it. Now that which is our Happiness, must be better than our selves; for it must perfect us. But these things being far worse, and inferior, the Soul in cleaving to them, is secretly conscious that it abaseth and disparageth it self; and therefore cannot find true satisfaction. Nothing can fill the Soul, but that which eminently contains in it all good. But now, as Light is only divided, and parcel'd

H 2                      out

out among the Stars, but is all united in the Sun : So Goodness is only parcell'd out among the Creatures; this Creature hath one share, and that another ; not any of them contains the whole sum of Goodness. This is proper to God only, who is the Author and Original of them all, in whom all Excellencies and Perfections are concentred. And therefore in him alone can be found that rest and satisfaction which the Soul in vain seeks for, in any thing besides himself.

These are the Demonstrations of the World's Vanity ; which, though they be many, and various, yet I doubt not  
but

but every Man's particular experience may furnish him with divers others. But whatever our Observations are, the Uses we may make of them are these.

*First*; It should teach us to I.  
 admire and adore the good  
 Providence of God to his  
 Children, in so ordering it,  
 that the World should be thus  
 vain, and deal so ill with those  
 who serve it. For if it were  
 not so infamous and deceitful  
 as it is, if it did not frustrate  
 and disappoint our Hopes, and  
 pay us with Vexation, when it  
 promiseth Fruition and Con-  
 tent: What thinkest thou, O  
 Christian, would be the end of  
 this? Would any one think of  
 H 3 God,

God, or remember Heaven, and the Life to come? St. *Augustine* somewhere speaks excellently, *Turbat me Mundus, & Ego eum diligo; quid si non turbaret?* The World troubles and molests me, and yet I love it; What if it did not trouble me? Certainly, we should fall into an utter forgetfulness of God, if we could find any true satisfaction here. We should never think of returning to the Fountain of living Waters, if we could find enough in Cisterns to quench the Thirst of our Souls. And therefore God deals with us, as some great Person would do with a disobedient Son, that forsakes his House, and riots among his Tenants: His Father

ther gives order they should treat him ill, affront, and chase him from them, and all, that he might reduce him. The same doth God. Man is his wild and debauch'd Son. He flies from the Commands of his Father, and cannot endure to live under his strict and severe Government. Whither goes he? But to the pleasures of the World, and Revels and Riots among the Creatures. But God resolves to recover him, and therefore commands every Creature to handle him roughly. Burn him Fire, toss him Tempests, and Shipwrack his Estate; forsake him Friends, Designs fail him; Children be rebellious to him, as he is to me; let his Supports and De-

pendances sink under him, his Riches melt away, leave him poor, and despis'd, and destitute. These are all God's Servants, and must obey his Will. And to what end is all this, but that seeing himself forsaken of all, he may at length, like the beggar'd Prodigal, return again to his Father,

- II. *Secondly* ; If the Vanity of the World be such, and so great, if it be only an empty Bubble, a swelling Nothing, less solid than the dream of a Shadow ; if it be thus unsuitable, uncertain, and unsatisfactory, as I have demonstrated to you : what gross folly then are most Men guilty of  
in

in setting so high a price upon that which is of no worth nor substance? Though formerly we have been so much deceived as to take the World's Paint and Varnish for true Beauty, and its glittering for substantial Treasure; yet now since the Cheat is discovered, since you have seen this false Pack opened, and nothing but counterfeit Wares obtruded upon you, your folly will be inexcusable, if after Experiments and Admonitions, you should contribute any longer to your own Cheat, and set a price upon things which you know to be vile and worthless. The wise Man (as you have heard) sums up their whole Value, only in a great Cypher,

pher, and a great Blot, *Vanity*, and *Vexation*. At what price would you rate *Vanity*, which is nothing? Or *Vexation*, which is worse than nothing?

And therefore our Saviour, *Mark 4. 9.* compares the things of this World to *Thorns*; *Some fell among Thorns*: which *Thorns* he interprets to be the *Cares of this World*, and the *deceitfulness of Riches*, v. 19. Now, he were a mad Man, that to assuage his Hunger, would attempt to swallow a Bush of *Thorns*. No less is the madness and extream folly of most Men, who to satisfy the eager Appetite of an hungry and indigent Soul, gape after the *Thorns* of this World, and chew *Thistles*; which



which instead of yielding them either Grapes or Figs, will only serve to pierce them through with innumerable Sorrows.

A Man's Wisdom or Folly is commonly judged by the Bargains he makes. If he lay out that which is very precious, to purchase what is of no worth, this we justly account a foolish Bargain. If on the other hand, he purchase that which is of great Price, with something little worth, we account it a wise and thriving Bargain. Now here we may see the gross folly of most Men. Though they are wise enough in bartering one part of the World for another ; yet they shew themselves very  
Fools

Fools in purchasing any part of the World with that which is no part of it. The Scripture hath told us, That all that is in the World, is Honour, Pleasure, or Profit. While we only traffick with these for one another, we do not amiss. The World is a proper price for it self. And doubtless we may lawfully part with some worldly Advantages to procure others. But then there are other things which do not belong to the World under this Acception: Our Affections, our Consciences, our precious and immortal Souls. And these God hath given us to trade vvith for Heaven, and Eternal Glory. Novv herein lies the folly of most Men, that they purchase

purchase the vile things of this World, vvith such an inestimable price, and extravagantly outbid themselves to procure Triffes with that which might procure them eternal Happiness. More particularly.

*First* ; Is it not extream folly I. to lavish out precious Affections, upon vile and vain Objects? Affections are the Wings of the Soul, without which the Soul it self, were but a dull and unactive Car-kass. These God hath given it, that it might be able to take its flight to Heaven, and lodg it self in his Bosom. Now, how unworthy a thing is it, only to flutter to and fro upon the surface of the Earth, to clog and clotter these Wings with

with mire and dirt, which were at first made to take so high, and so noble a flight?

\* Col. 3. 2.

\* The Apostle hath commanded us to *set our Affections on things Above, and not on things on the Earth.* And indeed, there is great reason for it. For the two choice Affections of the Soul are *Love*, and *Joy*. Now that is most worthy our Love, that can return a Joy most worthy of us. But the Joy that the World gives, is usually tumultuous, alway check'd with some secret annoy, and it ends with a dulness and damp upon the Spirits. It is but like the empty † *crackling of Thorns under a Pot*, that for the present makes a great noise and blaze, but suddenly vanishesth

† Eccl. 7. 6.  
*Flamma stipula exorta, claro crepitu, largo fulgore, cito incremento; sed enim materiam levi, caduco incendio, nullis reliquit. Apul. Apol.*

nisheth all away into smoak. Whereas an heavenly Christian feels sometimes a ponderous and weighty Joy, a Joy springing up in his Soul, almost intolerable, and altogether unutterable, a Joy that melts him into extasie and rapture. ' How infinitely doth he then disdain that any Soul should be so wretchedly foolish, as to prefer the World before, or equalize it with God ! He thinks the Happiness he then enjoys so great, that although he believes it is, yet he cannot conceive how it should be more, or greater in Heaven it self. Then the Soul claps its Wings ; it would fain take its flight, and be gone : it breaths, it pants, it reaches  
after

after God, and falls into an Agony of Joy and Desire inconceivably mixt together. Can the World give us any such over-powring Joy as this? It may afford us Corn and Wine, the weak Recruits of a frail Life: but when it hath emptied all its Store and Abundance into our Bosoms, it is not worthy to be mentioned with the Love and Favour of God, which is *better than Life it self*. And therefore the Psalmist makes it his Prayer, Psal. 4. 6. *Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon us: Thou hast put gladness in my Heart, more than in the time that their Corn and Wine encreased.*

Joy

The Joy of the World resembles a Torrent : As upon a glut of Rain, you shall have a Torrent come rolling along with Noise and Violence, overflowing its Banks, and bearing all before it ; yet it is but muddy and impure Water, and 'tis soon gone and dried up. Such is all the Joy this World can give ; it makes a great noise, 'tis commonly immoderate, and swells beyond its due Bounds, yet 'tis but a muddy and impure Joy, it soon rolls away, and leaves nothing behind but a drowth in the Soul. Now since the World's Joy is but such a poor empty thing as this, it is most gross folly for us to lay out our best Love upon that which

I cannot

cannot repay us with the best Joy.

2. *Secondly*; If the World be thus vain, what folly is it to lay out our most serious Cares and Contrivances upon it! The Cares of worldly Men are most absurd and irrational. Ask them why they care? they will tell you it is that they may live without care: and yet the more they get, the more do their Cares swarm and encrease about them. To what purpose do they thus disquiet themselves? They were as good make Nets to catch the Wind, as lay Plots either to obtain, or secure a World, which is so slippery, and so full of Disappointments, that neither



ther they who have it, are sure of keeping it; nor they who have it not, of getting it. We may observe a kind of coyness in the World: Those who court it most, and pursue it closest, oft-times miss of their Designs, because they over-act them. And it is commonly seen, that those (who as we use to say) have many Irons in the Fire, get nothing thereby, but only the burning of their own Fingers.

'Tis true, there is a prudential and providential Care, that is so far from being chargeable with folly, that it is necessary, and a great part of our Duty, not only as we are Men, but as we are \* Christians. And \*1 Tim. 5.8 this prudential Care is, when

we do, what lawfully we may to procure the Comforts of Life ; and then with all Quietness and Indifferency, submit the success to God. This is a Care of Diligence. But that which is justly branded with Folly, is a Care of Diffidence, which is alway accompanied with Torment, Fears, and Distractions about the Success and Issue, and most unreasonably vexeth us, for what is not in our power to determine. Such a Care as this usurps upon God. And certainly it is no less a Fault to invade God's part, than to neglect our own ; and a like Folly. The right temper a Christian should observe in procuring any worldly Comfort, is to interest his  
Judg-

Judgment in the choice of Means, but to keep his Affections disinterested and unconcern'd in the Event. But when we are anxious how our Designs will succeed, we make it a Torment to us in getting, before we can make it a Comfort to us in enjoying.

To what purpose then dost thou, O worldling, rack thy Brains with Contrivances, how to fill thy Baggs with Treasure, how to empty them out with Advantage? When thou hast added Heap to Heap; of all thy Store thou enjoyest no more, than what thou eatest, or drinkest, or wearest: And of this too thou enjoyest no more, than will just suffice to satisfy thy Hunger,

ger, to quench thy Thirst, and to fence off the Injuries of the Weather : All the rest turns either to Diseases, or Burdens. True Reason will teach us to chuse our Estates, as we

*\* Fortuna, velut tunica, magis concinna quàm longa probanda, quippe etiam ea si non gestetur, & trahatur, nihilo minùs quàm lacinia prapendens impedit & precipitat. Etenim in omnibus ad vite munia utendis, quicquid aptam moderationem supergreditur oneri potius quam usui exuberat. Apul. Apol.*

would do our \* Garments, not those which are largest, but those which are fittest for us. Vast and overflowing Estates are but like huge enormous Rudders, that rather serve to sink the Ship, than steer it : Their Abundance is useless, and their Excess dangerous. To what end

therefore is all our care and carking, all our perplexing and solicitous Thoughts, those parching

parching and consuming Distractions, which can hasten on nothing but our own natural Decays; to what end are they, unless it be to contradict our Saviour, and shew that we have a Power to make our \* *black Hairs white*? When \* Mat. 5.36. we lay subtil and intricate Designs, to obtain the things of this World, we are but like Spiders, that with a great deal of Art and Labour, weave a curious Cobweb, only to catch Flies; and possibly spend more of their Bowels in framing it, than the Prey they catch can again repair. Yea, and it may be too, before the Prey be caught, both they and their Web are swept down together, and trod in the Dust.

So when we frame Designs, to get any worldly Advantage, it is but taking a great deal of pains to catch a Fly. And possibly before it be caught, the rude hand of Death wraps us about in our Cobweb, and sweeps us down into the Grave, † and in that very moment, we, and all our well-laid Projects perish together.

† Ps. 146. 4.

3. Thirdly ; If the World be thus vain, What extream and prodigious Folly is it, to take as much pains to secure the poor and perishing Concernments of it, as would suffice to secure Heaven and Eternal Glory, were they laid out that way ? We labour for the Bread

Bread that perisheth, and we perish with it in our very Mouths. About this are our Hearts, our Hands, our Strength, our Time employed: vvhether as the great Things of Eternity are so utterly neglected by us, as if they vv ere none of our Concernments to look after. Were vve but as laborious in our Christian Calling, as vve commonly are in our Worldly Callings, Salvation vvould not lie upon our Hands unvvrought; God and Christ, and all Heaven vv ere ours. Who vvould doubt, vvhen they see Men so busy about Impertinencies, and the trivial Affairs of this World, but that they were much more anxious about their Souls? Who vvould  
not

not conclude, that certainly their great Work is already done, that shall see them so earnest and solicitous about petty Matters? But alas! It may astonish Men and Angels, that rational Creatures, vvhho have immortal Souls, Souls vvwhose endless duration, must abide either in inconceivable Misery or Bliss, should trifle avvay that time and strength vvvhich might secure their everlasting Happines, about those vain Nothings, that have neither Happines in them, nor Continuance. Certainly, the Service of God is not more painful, than the drudgery of the World: And sure I am, it is far more cleanly. Thou shalt not in his Service



vice set thine Hand to any  
foul Office: Whereas the World  
employs thee basely to rake  
together thick Clay, and load  
thy self vvith it; and the De-  
vil, yet vvorse, to rake in the  
mire and filth of all manner  
of Defilements, vvhich novv  
pollute the Soul, and vvill  
hereafter damn it. Both these  
are most grievous Task-  
masters. Some draw *Iniquity*  
*with Cords of Vanity, and Sin as*  
*it were with a Cart-rope, Isa. 5.*  
18. They are so enslaved to  
the Work of the Devil, that  
he puts them into his Team,  
makes them dravv and strain  
for their Iniquities, and doth  
them a Courtesy vvhen their  
Sins come easily. He makes  
them toil and svveat in carry-  
ing

ing Faggots to their ovvn Fire, and blovvng up those Flames, vvvhich must for ever burn them. Others (as the *Prophet* expresseth it, *Hab. 2. 13.*) *labour in the Fire, and weary themselves for very Vanity.* They take great pains in the VVorld, and meet vvith great Disappointments; for both are signified by *labouring in the Fire*, vvhere vvhat they produce, cannot be enjoyed, but is consumed betvveen their hands.

Since then you must take so much pains, either for Sin, or Vanity, vvhy vvill you not be persvaded rather to lay it out upon that vvvhich is substantially good and eternally so? God requires not more,  
but

but only other Work from you : And the *many things* that *Martha* was careful about, Religion and Holiness reduceth to the *one Thing necessary* ; which though it contains many particular Duties under it, yet by reason of its uniformity and subserviency to it self, is less distracting and cumbersome. The Wheels of a Watch move and click as fast, when it goes false, as when it goes true : and if it be but set right at first, the same activity of the Spring will so continue it, which before made its Motion irregular. So it is here : The same Activity and Industry which you irregularly use in pursuit of the World, would  
procure

procure Heaven and Glory for you, were it that way directed. Your Cares, your Contrivances, your Endeavours, need be no more than now they are; only what before you laid out upon the World, reserve now for Heaven. And how infinitely reasonable is this! Certainly they are most stupidly foolish, that will take up Vanity at as dear a rate as Happiness, and give as much for Vexation, as for endless Joy.

4. *Fourthly*; If the things of this World be so vain, what inexcusable Folly is it to part with the Peace, or the Purity of our Consciences for them! And yet what more common?  
If

If Men can get any thing of the World at the price of a Sin, they think they have made a gainful Bargain. And therefore the Devil hath recourse to this, as his most prevailing Temptation. When he set on our Saviour in the Wilderness, the last Assault was, \* *All* <sup>Mat. 4. 9.</sup> *these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me*; And when this Battery could not make a Breach, he raiseth his Siege, as despairing of success. And this is the usuall temptation by which he assaults others. Judas comes with his † *Quid dabis* <sup>† Mat. 26. 15</sup> *what will you give me?* and sets Christ, and his own Conscience to sale, for the inconsiderable sum of *thirty pieces*

pieces. He demands no more than the common Market  
 \* *Exod. 21.* \* price of a Slave (not amount-  
 † <sup>32.</sup> *Accounting* ing to above † eight and thirty  
*the value of* Shillings) for the Lord of Life  
*the common* and Glory: And thinks his  
*Shekel to be* Bargain so good, that he gives  
*15 pence of* himself to the Devil for Van-  
*our Money.* tage. This is the very Root  
 of all that Injustice, and Ra-  
 pine, and Oppression, and  
 Violence that is to be found  
 among Men. They all strive  
 and tug, who shall get most  
 of this Earth from one ano-  
 ther; and lose Heaven, and  
 their own Consciences in the  
 scuffle. This is it that makes  
 Men so oft shift their Sails,  
 that they may run before eve-  
 ry Wind that blows. If times  
 grow rough and tempestuous,  
 and

and they must throw over-board, either their Gain, or their Godliness; this perswades them to make shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience, only that they may bear up in this World, though they sink hereafter. Now, what deplorable Folly is this! When thy Conscience is disquieted with the tormenting review of past Crimes, what will all thy ill-gotten Wealth avail thee? Thou wilt then with extream horror cast thy Eyes upon all thy Treasures of Wickedness, when Conscience shall tell thee, Thou hast not only treasur'd up them, but Wrath too against the Day of Wrath.

K

*Fifthly;*

5. *Fifthly* ; What desperate Folly is it to purchase a vain World, with the loss of our precious Souls ! So our Saviour, Math. 16. 26. *What is a Man profited if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul ; or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul ?* O think what great losers they must needs be, who lose their Souls, to gain the World, and must at last lose the World too, together with their Souls ! This is the only thing that damns Men, that they prefer the Pleasures, Honours, Profits, and pitiful Nothings of this World, before their precious and immortal Souls, which are more worth



worth than ten thousand Worlds. What is this but a stupidity as gross as that of the old Heathens, to make a vile VVorm our God, and sacrifice an Ox to it ; or a Monster our God, and sacrifice a Man to it ? Think how dreadful and grating will be the reflexions of VVorldlings in Hell, to consider that there they must lie and burn to Eternity, for their inordinate love to that VVorld, of which they have nothing left them, besides the bitter remembrance. VVhat will it then avail them that they have lived here in Ease and Delights, when all their Mirth shall be turned into Groans and Howlings ? VVhat will all their

Treasures and Riches avail them, when these shall be melted down about them, to encrease their torment? Believe it, 'tis sad to be left to the conviction of that Day, when the Vanity of Earth shall appear in the Torments of Hell. Be perswaded therefore, as you have renounced it in all its Poms and Vanities, when you gave up your Names to Christianity, so to renounce it likewise in your Lives; habitually, at all times, by sitting loose from it, and living above it; and actually, whensoever God calls for any of your temporal Enjoyments, that is, when you cannot keep them without wounding your Consciences, and hazarding your Souls. *Thirdly;*

*Thirdly* ; Another Use may 3.  
 be this, If the VWorld be thus  
 vain and empty, why then  
 should we pride our selves in,  
 or prize our selves by any  
 poor enjoyments of it? How  
 foolish is it to account thy self  
 a better Man than another, on-  
 ly because thy Dunghil is a lit-  
 tle bigger than his! These things  
 are not at all to be reckon-  
 ed into the value and worth  
 of a Man: they are all with-  
 out thee, and concern thee no  
 more than fine Cloaths do the  
 health or strength of the Body.  
 'Tis VVealth indeed that  
 makes all the noise and bustle  
 in the VWorld, and challeng-  
 eth all the respect and honour  
 to it self, and the ignorant  
 K 3 Vulgar,

Vulgar, whose Eyes are dazled with Pomp and Bravery, pay it with a stupid and astonish'd Reverence. Yet know, that it is but thy Silks and Velvet, thy Lands, or thy Retinue and Servants; they venerate, not thee: and if thou think'st otherwise, thou art as justly ridiculous, as that Ass in the Apologue, that grew very gravely proud, and took state when the People fell prostrate before him, adoring not him, but the Idol he carried.

Those things which belong to the perfection of a Man, are all within him: Knowledge, and Wisdom, and Temperance, a serene Mind, and calm Affections, an inflexible Vertue, and a Soul constant  
and

and true to it self in all Occurrences. Give me such an one that can stand firm and unshaken upon his own Basis, when the whole World totters ; that knows what is just and honest, and dares do it ; that is master of his own Passions, and scorns to be a Slave to another's ; such an one in his Rags and Poverty, is a far better Man than those gay things, who owe all their Parts, and Wisdom, and Vertue, to their Rentals, and whose Tenants and Stewards bring them in the yearly Revenue of their Reputation. But then suppose this excellent Person indowed with Divine Grace, and the true Fear and Love of God, and this will exalt him

K 4      above

above the highest and greatest of other Men, as far as they themselves are above the vilest of Beasts. *Solomon* tells us, *Prov. 10. 20. That the Heart of the Wicked is little worth* ; it is of no price nor value : And shall his Estate be, when his Heart is not ? Indeed nothing makes us rich as Men, but Wisdom and Vertue ; nor as Christians, but Piety and Holiness. And in these which are the only true and substantial Riches, the poorest Christian may vie stakes with all the World. Drop millions of Gold, boundless Revenues, ample Territories, Crowns and Scepters, and a poor contemptible Christian lays his one God against all these, and beggars them. *Fourthly ;*

Fourthly ; If the World and 4.  
all the Enjoyments of it be \*  
thus vain, \* this should fortify  
us against the fear of Death,  
which can deprive us of no-  
thing but what is both vain and  
vexatious.

\* μάλιστα  
σε ἐκ τούτου  
πρὸς τὴν θά-  
νατον ποιη-  
σαι ἢ ἐπιβί-  
ουσαι ἢ ἐπὶ τῇ  
ἐπιβίῳ μέλει  
ὡν μέλλεις  
ἀφίστασθαι.

Anton. l. 9. S. 3. *Amatis mors abducit, non à bonis, verum si quarimus. Hoc quidem à Cyrenaico Hegisia sic copiose disputatur, ut is à rege Ptolæmo prohibitus esse dicatur illa in scholis dicere, quod multi his auditis, mortem sibi ipsi consciscerent. Cic. Tus. quest. l. 1.*

Life is nothing else but an  
huddle of Business, a great  
swarm of Employments, that  
have more stings in them, than  
Hony. If we be great, we are  
but the larger Hives for Cares.  
If honourable, we are but rai-  
sed above others to be the  
more weather-beaten. An  
high

high degree in this World, doth but shelter other Mens Cares under our Wings, and adopt other Mens Troubles, as a wretched Supplement to our own. If our Estate be mean and low ; as it exposeth us to Contempt and Injuries, so it engageth us to rescue our selves from the pressures of Poverty by our own sweat and industry. Those few things that are necessary to a comfortable subsistence in the World, will yet cost us care and labour, an aking Heart, and a weary Hand ; and this turns our Bread into Stones, and our Fish into Scorpions. If we have too much Business in the World, our Callings become a Burden or Temptation



tion to us : And if we have none, we become a Burden to our selves and to others. God hath written Vanity and Vexation upon every Condition, and if his Providence create not Troubles for us, yet our own Folly will. Thus hath Man made himself a Slave and Drudg to the World, over which God hath made him Lord.

Why then should Death be so terrible, which comes only to ease us of our burden, to stroak the sweat from our Brows, and to give us a profound rest from all our Labours in the Bed of the Grave? *There* (as Job saith) *the weary* Job 3. 17. *be at rest* ; and all Cares and Troubles vanish, as soon as  
our

our Heads touch that Pillow. *There is no Work nor Device in the Grave whither we are going ; but a deep Repose, a secure Retirement, where none of the Vexations of this Life shall ever find us.*

And as it frees us from all the Cares, so from all the Sorrows of this World. What is our Life but a Bubble ? Our Sighs are the Air, and our Tears the Water that make it. The first possession that we take of this World, is by crying : And there is nothing in it that we hold by a surer tenure than our Grievs. Tears are the Inheritance of our Eyes, either our Sins call for them or our Sufferings, and nothing can dry them up but the

the Dust of the Grave. Sometimes we lose a Friend, or near Relation ; the Tribute we owe their Memory must be paid down in Tears. Sometimes their ungodly Practices torment us, when by their Lewdness and Debaucheries they are lost both to their own Interests , and our Hopes. Sometimes compassion of other Mens Sufferings, affects us with a tender Sorrow ; and as if we had not grief enough springing up out of our own Bowels, we call in foreign Succours to augment the Score. And many times tedious and lingring Sicknesses waste us, grinding Pains rack and torture us, which were far the more intolerable, but that they hasten

hasten on that Death, that puts an end and period to all a Christian's Miseries. We are not concerned in the Grave, at the loss of some Friends, nor the evil Courses of others: What Calamities befall the World, or those whom we loved dearest in it. There it troubles us not, though Preferment go by the merit of Flattery and Baseness, while the generous and gallant Soul, starves through the mere rigor of his Vertue. It concerns us nothing what stinking Breath blasts our good Name; or what unworthy Foot treads upon our Grave. Here a little pain molests us; but there whole Limbs rot, and fall off, and crumble into Dust, without

out at all disturbing that quiet rest, that buries all the Cares and Sorrows of this Life in silence and oblivion. Where then is the dreadfulnes of Death, which only frees us from the Troubles and Crosses of a wretched Life? It is unreasonable to complain of that Change, which delivers us from a World, of which we are still complaining: And it is childish to quarrel at that Hand which undresses us, and strips off our uneasy Garments, only to lay us to sleep.

*Lastly* ; If the World be so vain and empty, we may learn to be well contented with our present State and Condition, what- 5.

whatsoever it be. It hath been fully demonstrated, that there can be no compleat Satisfaction in any Estate: And why then should we desire change? The great ground of Discontent, is not our Wants, but our Desires. \* There is scarce any condition in the World so low, but may satisfy our Wants: And there is no Condition so high, as can satisfy our Desires. If we live according to the Law of Nature and Reason, we shall never be poor; but if we live according to fond Opinion and Phancy, we shall never be rich. That which we have, be it never so little, is full as satisfactory as that which we hope for, be it never so

† οὐδ' εἰς ὃ  
 ὅτι πένυς εἰς  
 τὰ ἀναστροφὰ  
 Clem. Alex.  
 Pæd. l. 2. c. 2.  
*Quod satia-*  
*re potest di-*  
*vis natura*  
*ministrat.*  
*Quod docet*  
*infrans glo-*  
*ria sine ca-*  
*ret. Petr.*

so little, is full as satisfactory as that which we hope for, be it never so great. For *Vanity, and Vexation of Spirit*, is past upon all that is in the World, whether it be more or less.

And therefore, O Christian, thou mayest well bear a narrow stint in the things of this World. If God reduce thee to a morsel of Bread, and a cup of Water, it is enough: This will suffice to bear thy Charges to Heaven; or if this too should fail, thy Journey will only be the shorter. Possibly God keeps thee short in Vanities, that he might bestow upon thee that which is a solid and substantial Good. The Psalmist tells us, Psalm. 68. 9. that God daily loads us with his

L                      Benefits.

*Benefits.* Though some may have more than others, yet every one hath his Load, as much as he can carry. Every Vessel cannot bear up with a like Sail; and therefore God, to keep us from oversetting, puts on so much as will safely bring us to Heaven; our desired Port. Let us therefore cast these Cares and Burdens upon him who hath promised to sustain us, and turn the stream of our Desires Heavenward, where alone we can find permanent and satisfactory Good.

† Ὅλον κενὸν πῖνεν  
 ὁ δὲ σπασθὲν  
 εἰσφέρειται; Ἐν τῇ  
 τοῦ διανοίας δίκαιᾳ, καὶ  
 πρᾶξι κοινωνίᾳ,  
 καὶ λόγῳ οἷον μὴ  
 ποτε διαφύσσειται, καὶ  
 διαρκῶς ἀπαζόμεν  
 πάντες

† Walk humbly with God, keep your selves always in an awful fear of his dread Majesty; be con-



constant in the exercise of Grace, and the performance of Duty:

These are the only things exempted from Vanity and Vexation; in these alone can the Soul find true Rest and Contentment. And

therefore Solomon, after he had pierc'd and search'd through all the World, and pronounced Riches, Strength, Beauty, Wisdom, Learning, and all to be *Vanity, and Vexation of Spirit*; he rests himself in the Close, and tells us, Chapter 12. 13. *Let us hear the Conclusion of the whole Matter: Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole*

L 2

of

πάντῃ συμβαίνειν ὡς ἀνάγκη, ὡς γνώριμον, ὡς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς τοιαύτης ἢ πηγῆς ῥεόν. Ἐκὼν σεαυτὸν τῇ κλωδοῖ συνεπιθύει, παρέχων συννήσαι οἷς ποτε προφύμασι βέλεται. Antonin. l. 4. S. 22.

**of Man : It is his whole Duty,  
and his only Happiness in this  
Life.**

---

**F I N I S.**

